

II. REMARKS

A telephone interview was conducted with Examiner Christina O. Sherr on March 23, 2004 at 3pm. As reflected in the Office Action mailed September 25, 2003 and the "Final" Office Action mailed March 10, 2004, claims 1-19 stand rejected over Cordery et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,175,827) ("Cordery") under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

Without discussion, the Examiner stated that upon review of the claims and cited reference, she concedes that Cordery is not on point and that the features of Applicant's invention. Thus, Applicant submits that the rejection of the claims over Cordery is not valid and the finality of the action mailed March 10, 2004, if not the action itself, must be withdrawn.

A brief discussion was then held regarding the features of Applicant's invention, in response to the Examiner's request for a summary of what Applicant considers the unique and patentable features of the invention. The features, as recited in claims 1, 6 and 20, were discussed.

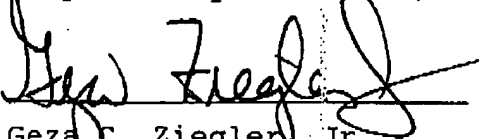
It is respectfully noted that Applicant believes it was not given due consideration in any of the Office Action mailed September 25, 2003, the response filed on December 18, 2003 or the Office Action (Final) mailed March 10, 2004. In prosecuting this Application, Applicant expended a considerable amount of time and expense to review the first Office Action and the Cordery reference, prepare and file a response to the first Office Action, review the Final Office Action and then engage the Examiner in an interview. It would appear that Applicant's time and efforts were wasted and unnecessary since the Examiner now concedes that the reference Cordery is not on point.

Applicant finds the process to this point disturbing, at the very least.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record, and are in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is invited to call Applicants' Attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment for any fees associated with this communication or credit any over payment to Deposit Account No. 16-1350.

Respectfully submitted,


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Reg. No. 44,004

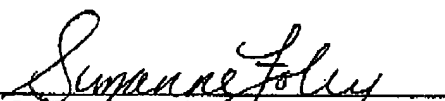
24 MARCH 2004
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